

# Luhya language

**Luhya** (/luːjə/; also **Luyia**, **Luhia** or **Luhiya**) is a Bantu language of western Kenya.

## Contents

### Dialects

- Comparison
- Comparison to Bantu

### External links

### References

## Dialects

The various Luhya tribes speak several related languages and dialects, though some of them are no closer to each other than they are to neighboring non-Luhya languages. For example, the Bukusu people are ethnically Luhya, but the Bukusu dialect is a variety of Masaba. (See Luhya people for details.) However, there is a core of mutually intelligible dialects that comprise Luhya proper:<sup>[6]</sup>

- Hanga (*OluWanga*)
- Tsotso (*OluTsotso*)
- Marama (*OluMarama*)
- Kisa (*OluShisa*)
- Kabras (*LuKabarasi*)
- East Nyala (*LuNyala*)

## Comparison

A comparison between two dialects of Luhya proper, and to two other Bantu languages spoken by the Luhya:

<b>Luhya</b>	
Luyia	
Oluluhyia	
<b>Native to</b>	Kenya
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Luhya people
<b>Native speakers</b>	15 million, incl. West Nyala (2019 census) <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Language family</b>	<p>Niger–Congo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Atlantic–Congo</li> <li>▪ Volta–Congo</li> <li>▪ Benue–Congo</li> <li>▪ Bantoid</li> <li>▪ Southern Bantoid</li> <li>▪ Bantu</li> <li>▪ Northeast Bantu</li> <li>▪ Great Lakes Bantu</li> <li>▪ Masaba–Luhya</li> <li>▪ <b>Luhya</b></li> </ul>
<b>Language codes</b>	
<b>ISO 639-3</b>	<p>luy – inclusive code (includes all languages spoken by ethnic Luhya, not just the following)<sup>[2]</sup></p> <p>Individual codes:</p> <p>lrm – Marama</p> <p>1wg – Wanga (Hanga)</p> <p>1ks – Kisa</p> <p>1to – Tsotso</p> <p>1kb – Kabras</p> <p>nle – (East) Nyala</p>
<b>Glottolog</b>	<p>cent2288 (<a href="http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/cent2288">http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/cent2288</a>)</p> <p>Central Luyia (incl. some Nyore)<sup>[3]</sup></p> <p>kabr1240 (<a href="http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/kabr1240">http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/kabr1240</a>)</p> <p>Kabras<sup>[4]</sup></p>
<b>Guthrie code</b>	JE.32 <sup>[5]</sup>

<u>English</u>	<u>Kisa</u>	<u>Logoli</u>	<u>Nyole</u>	<u>Wanga</u>
I (me)	eshie	nzi/ inze	ise	esie
words	amakhuwa	makuva	amang'ana, amakhuwa	amakhuwa
chair	eshifumbi	indeve/ endeve	indebe	eshisala
head	omurwe	mutwi	omurwe	om'rwe
money	amapesa	mang'ondo	amang'ondo, am'mondo, etsilupia	amapesa, irupia

## Comparison to Bantu

<u>English</u>	<u>Luhya</u>	<u>Kikuyu</u>	<u>Kinyarwanda</u>	<u>Lingala</u>	<u>Luganda</u>	<u>Shona</u>	<u>Swahili</u>	<u>Zulu</u>
children	abana, baana, otwana, orwana, vaana	twana	abana	bana	baana, abaana	vana	wana	abantwana
dog	imbwa	ngui (pron. gui)	imbwa	mbwa	mbwa, embwa	mbwa, imbwa	mbwa	inja
fire	omuliro	mwaki	umuriro	moto	omuliro	moto	moto	umlilo

## External links

- Eshitabo Eshiokhulaama nende Tsisakalamendo nende Akebiima Bindi Bieikanisa (<http://mammana.org/bcp/luhya1967/>) 1967 Anglican liturgical text digitized by Richard Mammana

## References

1. Luhya (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/luy/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)  
Marama (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/lrm/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)  
Wanga (Hanga) (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/lwg/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)  
Kisa (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/lks/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)  
Tsotso (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/lto/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)  
Kabras (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/lkb/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)  
(East) Nyala (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/nle/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
  2. "639 Identifier Documentation: luy" (<https://iso639-3.sil.org/code/luy>). SIL International.
  3. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Central Luyia" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/cent2288>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
  4. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Kabras" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/kabr1240>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
  5. Jouni Filip Maho, 2009. New Updated Guthrie List Online (<https://web.archive.org/web/20180203191542/http://goto.glocalnet.net/mahopapers/nuglonline.pdf>)
  6. Maho (2019)
- Musimbi Kanyoro (1989), "The Abaluyia of Kenya; one people, one language: What can be learned from the Luyia project": *The Abaluyia of Western Kenya*. (p. 27). (<https://web.archive.org/web/20121011200803/http://www.sil.org/acpub/repository/22547.pdf>)
  - Wanga-English dictionary (<http://sitemaker.umich.edu/mmarlo/files/wangadictionary.pdf>)

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